

Message Text

SECRET

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ORIGIN EA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 DHA-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02
SS-15 USIA-06 IO-13 /077 R

DRAFTED BY EA/TIMBS:MEASTON:CCH
APPROVED BY D:WARREN CHRISTOPHER
EA/TIMBS:REFRITTS

-----049883 120948Z /23

R 111713Z OCT 77
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR
INFO AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE
CINCPAC

S E C R E T STATE 243637

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SHUM, PINS, MY

SUBJECT: HUMAN RIGHTS

REF: KUALA LUMPUR 7176

1. THERE FOLLOWS TEXT GIVEN AT NEWS CONFERENCE WITH
JODY POWELL AT 2:30 P.M. EDT SEPTEMBER 29, 1977 REGARDING
HUMAN RIGHTS IN MALAYSIA.
BEGIN TEXT: QUOTE:
THERE WAS A DISCUSSION OF EFFORTS ON THE PART OF THIS
COUNTRY AND OF MALAYSIA TO ALLEVIATE THE SUFFERING OF
REFUGEES PREVIOUSLY FROM CAMBODIA AND VIETNAM; NOW I
UNDERSTAND, PRIMARILY FROM VIETNAM.

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THE PRIME MINISTER INDICATED THAT THEY HAD BEEN AND WILL
CONTINUE TO BE WILLING TO DO THEIR SHARE IN DEALING WITH
THE REFUGEE PROBLEM, EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR THE ACTION
RECENTLY TAKEN BY THIS GOVERNMENT IN ACCEPTING ADDITIONAL
REFUGEES.

THERE WAS A DISCUSSION OF THE DIFFICULTIES FACED BOTH BY

MALAYSIA AND BY OTHER NATIONS IN THAT AREA IN ASSIMILATING EVEN ON A TEMPORARY BASIS REFUGEES.

THERE WAS AN AGREEMENT THAT MALAYSIA AND THE UNITED STATES WOULD TOGETHER EXPLORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR INCREASED ASSISTANCE FROM OTHER NATIONS IN THE AREA IN DEALING WITH THIS PROBLEM.

I THINK THOSE ARE THE MAIN TOPICS COVERED IN THE PUBLIC SESSION OF THE MEETING. SOME OF THOSE WERE ALSO TOUCHED ON, I UNDERSTAND, IN THE PRIVATE SESSION.

THERE WAS A COMMENT FROM THE UNITED STATES SIDE WITH REGARD TO THE MALAYSIAN HUMAN RIGHTS RECORD, COMPLIMENTING THEM ON THAT, AND I BELIEVE MR. CHRISTOPHER SAID THAT THEY HAD BECOME IN MANY WAYS A MODEL NATION IN THIS PARTICULAR AREA.

I WILL BE GLAD TO TRY TO ANSWER WHAT QUESTIONS YOU MAY HAVE.

QUESTION: ARE WE SAYING THAT THEIR ATTITUDE TOWARD HUMAN RIGHTS HAS CHANGED, IMPROVED THIS YEAR?

MR. POWELL: THE COMMENTS THAT I HEARD WERE NOT VOICED IN THAT PARTICULAR CONTEXT. IT WAS JUST A STATEMENT OF,
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SORT OF CONGRATULATIONS ON THEIR RECORD IN THAT REGARD.

QUESTION: WAS THERE ANY SPECIFICS AS TO WHAT THEY ARE DOING?

MR. POWELL: NO, I DON'T -- IT WAS A GENERAL STATEMENT.

QUESTION: I THINK MAYBE WHAT HE IS DRIVING AT IS WHAT OUR ATTITUDE IS ABOUT THE TREATMENT OF THE CHINESE MINORITY, WITH THE RIOTS AND RESTRICTIVE LEGISLATION AND SO FORTH?

MR. POWELL: I THINK IT IS GENERALLY RECOGNIZED IN THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY -- I AM SUBJECT TO ARGUMENT ON THIS, I SUPPOSE -- THAT MALAYSIA HAS HAD FOR YEARS AN INSURGENCY PROBLEM THERE WHICH APPEARS TO BE PRETTY WELL UNDER CONTROL AND WHICH IS NOT CONSIDERED AT THIS POINT TO BE A THREAT TO THE ECONOMIC OR POLITICAL STABILITY, AND THAT THEY HAVE ATTEMPTED TO DEAL WITH THAT PROBLEM BUT HAVE EXERCISED GREAT CARE AND RESTRAINT IN THE IMPOSITION OF LAWS DESIGNED TO DEAL WITH THE PROBLEM OF INSURGENCY AND AN ATTEMPT TO MAKE SURE THAT THEY ARE

DEALING WITH SECURITY PROBLEMS AND NOT ALLOWING IT TO BE
USED IN A REPRESSIVE POLITICAL FASHION.

AS I SAY, ALTHOUGH THE DISCUSSION WAS NOT IN THAT MUCH

DETAIL, I THINK THAT IS A FAIRLY WELL RECOGNIZED FACT
INTERNATIONALLY. UNQUOTE.

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